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AN EVALUATION OF AN INTEGRATED SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAM

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Fifty lower-class Boston Negro students and 70 middle-class white suburban students ranging in age from 8 to 13 in grades 3 through 6 attended a suburban summer school in 1965. Boston students who were considered behavior problems did not qualify for the program, and all suburban students had volunteered to participate. Data were collected from teachers, students, and nonparticipating volunteer observers to evaluate the amount of the students' classroom participation and interracial social contact and the effect of the program on their knowledge about occupations and vocational goals. It was found that all the students participated actively, suburban girls less than the others, and that race was not a factor in their social interaction; however, because the two groups did not initially differ markedly in their occupational information or in their vocational goals, no conclusion could be reached about the effect of the program in this area. The students' achievement gains were not evaluated. (EF)

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PROBLEM

During the past few years, considerable public attention has been focused on what has been variably described as "racial imbalance," "de facto segregation,"etc., in various northern city public schools. Though there has been considerable controversy as to the effects of such conditions, at least one study, (Massachusetts State Board of Education, 1965), has concluded that racial imbalance is educationally harmful and has recommended a variety of ways by which to deal with this complex problem. Stimulated by the opinion of a prominent Bostonian that nearby suburbs could share in the responsibility for resolution of the problem, residents of one Boston suburb devised a plan and obtained private donations whereby fifty Negro children from Boston could attend their regularly scheduled suburban summer school in 1965.

This paper presents the results of an evaluation of the project. Besides the usual problems which are encountered when one attempts to do research in a community action program, the present evaluation was carried out under the additional handicap of operating entirely with volunteer help because there was insufficient time to apply for financial support.

It was decided to focus on experiences which might occur in at least several classes, rather than to restrict attention to specific courses. Since it was evident that pupils would vary considerably in age and

educational level as well as in the kinds of courses they had chosen, it did not seem appropriate to use achievement tests, course grades, or other usual educational indices of change.

The first two research questions focused on the program itself and the pupils' response to it: How did the Boston and suburban groups compare in their participation in class? What evidence was there of interracial contacts among the pupils? The next two major research questions represent an attempt to detect effects of the summer experience. Various practical considerations led to our selection of two questions which tend to focus on changes anticipated in the Boston group: Were there changes in the educational and occupational information possessed by the Boston and suburban children? Were there any changes in the educational and vocational goals of the pupils in these two groups?

METHOD

Subjects

The investigators decided to study not only the Boston group, but also to include all suburban pupils enrolled in classes in which there were any Boston pupils. In selecting the Boston group, the school administrators decided to exclude candidates who were known as serious behavior problems and those who had had records of frequent tardiness or absenteeism. This was done so that pupils selected would at least be likely to be on time for the chartered bus which represented their only means of getting to class. Their suburban counterparts were not "selected," per se, but rather became involved by expressing interest in the Summer School and completing enrollment procedures. Actual composition of the

classes was determined by the pupils who enrolled for the respective courses. Thus, classes varied in terms of pupils' ages and educational levels, number of boys and girls, number of Negroes and whites, as well as in terms of the course content.

Fifty Boston Negro pupils and seventy white suburban pupils ranged in age from eight years to thirteen years, and were in grades three through six during the spring term in 1965. The Boston pupils came from a predominantly lower socioeconomic class neighborhood, while the suburban pupils came from a predominantly middle socioeconomic neighborhood.

Procedure

Data were collected from teachers, pupils, and nonparticipant observers. The investigators met with the teachers on the second day of classes to explain the nature of the research and to ask for their cooperation and suggestions. They were requested to make note of the process and effects of the summer program so that they could report them to the investigators during a "debriefing" session to be held during the last week of classes. During the third and sixth week of classes, the teachers evaluated their pupils by means of a series of rating scales concerned with the pupils' participation in class, how they responded to the teacher, their relationships with other pupils in the class. After the last week of classes the "debriefing session" was held with the teachers in which they were asked to tell the investigators anything and everything that they had noted during the summer session while a tape recording was made of the session for later analysis.

Three questionnaires were administered to the pupils during the first

two weeks of class and again during the sixth week. Questions asked had to do with their knowledge about jobs, their educational and vocational plans (at least as they now have such plans), their impressions of the other pupils in their class, their expectations of summer school and the extent to which these expectations were satisfied.

Nonparticipant classroom observers had two orientation sessions with the investigators, during which time the purpose and the procedures for the observations were discussed. They were instructed to make tabulations of specific events during two twenty-minute periods of class in accordance with an observation schedule designed for this research. These provided quantitative data about the pupils' participation in class and their interactions with one another. During the remaining portion of the class period they were instructed to record their overall observations of the process and apparent effects of the program. During the last week of school, after their observation period, they also had a "debriefing session" with the investigators which was quite similar to the one described above with the teachers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings are reported and discussed for each of the questions in the order in which they were listed earlier in this report. Sources and nature of the data will be indicated respectively for each question.

Participation in Class

Previous studies have indicated that lower class children tend to feel alienated in classrooms generally (Passow, 1963; Riessman, 1962). It has been suggested that they feel reluctant to speak out and to

participate in class since doing so is supposedly seen by them as risking getting into trouble. Such behavior has been observed in a recent program for Boston students of high school age (King, 1964). Compatible findings have been obtained in some experimental studies (Douvan, 1956; Zigler and Kanzer, 1962). Considering these findings generally, and also the additional fact that the Boston children were going to summer school in an unfamiliar community, there would seem to be good reason to expect considerably less participation in class by the Boston group than by the suburban group.

Observers were placed in the classrooms during the last five weeks of the six-weeks summer session. Each class was visited at least twice; some classes were observed as many as five times. During her two-hour observation period, each observer was instructed to spend at least one twenty-minute segment tabulating the number of times pupils participated in class. They were instructed to tabulate separately for each of the following subgroups: Boston girls, suburban girls, Boston boys, suburban boys. Provision was made for notations for both verbal class participation and for nonverbal class participation. (e.g., volunteers to collect papers).

For each class observed a participation index (PI) was computed for each of the component subgroups listed above. (i.e., Boston girls, suburban girls, Boston boys, suburban boys). The PI computation consisted of dividing the total number of class-participation tabulations for that sub-group by the total number of pupils in that subgroup present. Finally, PI's for all classes observed each week were tabulated and summarized. Table 1 presents these results.

(Table 1 about here)

As can be seen in Table 1, all four subgroups actively participated in class, though the suburban girls were not as active as were the other three subgroup members. There were differences from week to week, but these data would suggest that the Boston pupils were at least as active as were the suburban pupils.

More subjective data obtained in interviews with the teachers and with the observers were consistent with the conclusion that both the Boston and the suburban pupils had actively participated in class. There were comments concerning individual differences and about greater overall participation in some classes than in others. The teachers and observers reported that there may have been less initial participation and greater increase in participation by the Boston pupils, but such trends were not apparent in the observers' tabulations.

There was good reason to expect considerably less participation by the Boston group than by the suburban group. That such results were not obtained provided one indication of success for the particular project, but it raises some interesting questions which merit further study, such as: 1) Were these results obtained because selection of the Boston pupils involved exclusion of children with behavior problems in school? 2) Do statements about reluctance to participate in class really apply only to high school students? 3) Or, do such statements only apply to certain subgroups among the culturally deprived? 4) Were these results obtained primarily because of the novelty of the experience or because of certain (currently undesignated) features of the summer program?

Interaction Among Pupils

The Boston pupils came from predominantly Negro schools and the suburban pupils came from schools with a predominantly white population. Presumably one of the purposes of this project was to provide opportunity for contact with children of another race. Unless physical presence in the same school building is accepted as achieving this objective, it would seem that one should look for other evidence of interactions between the Negro and white children.

The first relevant information which we received about this was that the unrestricted enrollment procedure had led to different numbers of Negro and white children in the various classes. Five classes were composed predominantly of suburban pupils, four had more Boston pupils, and three had roughly equal numbers of Boston and suburban pupils. This occurred because pupils were free to select courses appropriate for them without regard to the resulting racial composition.

Our data for this question primarily come from the interviews with the teachers and with the classroom observers. We were able to obtain additional information from the classroom observers' weekly notes and from the responses of the pupils to sociometric-type questions about their peers.

There was evidence of many cross-race interactions by the sixth week, despite a predominance of "same race, same sex" and "same race, opposite sex" interactions even up to the third week. There were noted individual differences among the pupils, and differences from class to class, not only in the kinds of interactions but also in the amount of interaction.

For example, pupils in Dramatics had more opportunity for contact with peers than did pupils in Typing class simply because of the kind of course. Seating arrangements were quite important in determining with whom the initial contacts were made. It is interesting that in one class, where there was occasion for pupils to choose new seating arrangements during the summer, a shift occurred in that the Boston pupils changed from a rather tightly knit group to greater dispersement throughout the class by the end of the summer. Similar kinds of changes were noted among the suburban pupils; for example, both their behavior in the classroom and their preferences as expressed in the questionnaires indicated an increasing awareness of and contact with the Boston pupils during the six-weeks period.

Thus the kinds of initial patterns and gradual shifts which we detected are quite usual whenever members of two groups come into contact for the first time. Race, per se, did not seem to be a major barrier to the shifts which occurred. If anything, the pupils' responses to the sociometric-type questions would suggest that sex was a greater barrier to contact than were other factors considered here.

Educational and Occupational Information

Since there are characteristic differences in occupations between those persons in lower-class communities of Boston and those in middle-class communities, it seemed reasonable to assume that suburban children would probably be more likely to be aware of skilled and professional jobs requiring some form of higher education. The purpose of one research procedure was to test this assumption. In other words, do the two groups of children differ initially in regard to their knowledge of occupations and,

if so, did the Boston children show an increase in knowledge at the end of the summer program?

One questionnaire asked the pupils to list any 15 jobs they could think of. The results were categorized according to the following six classifications: (1) professional, technical, and managerial, (2) clerical and sales work, (3) service work, (4) agricultural, marine, and forestry work, (5) mechanical work, and (6) manual work.

(Table 2 about here)

Results at the beginning of the summer program showed that the greatest number of occupations listed by both suburb and Boston groups were in the professional, technical, and managerial category. (Table 2). Similar results were obtained after the summer program.

(Table 3 about here)

Table 3 indicates that all pupils in both groups were aware of occupations within the professional, technical and managerial category. These data suggest that awareness of occupations requiring much skill and education is roughly equivalent for both groups. The summer experience did not seem to have affected either group in this regard. Although there was good reason to expect differences between the groups, these results may raise questions about some widely held beliefs. It would seem that this may merit further study.

Educational and Occupational Goals

It is generally assumed that lower-class children, especially Negro lower-class children, tend to terminate their formal education early and enter primarily unskilled and semi-skilled occupations. Such behavior is

believed to result, in part, from relatively low aspirations guided by limited opportunities and an inadequately stimulating environment. Another notion is that the behavior is a predominant characteristic of adults in the community who serve as role models for the children to follow. One investigator (Boyd, 1952), however, found that one sample of Negro elementary school children verbalized higher levels of aspiration than did a matched sample of white children. He suggested that the results reflected a strong desire to improve conditions. Riessman (1962) suggests that deprived children who attend integrated schools having large numbers of middle-class children are much more likely to go to college and to aspire to professional careers. In the present study, there was a question as to whether the Boston and suburban groups differ in vocational goals and, if so, whether any changes occurred over the summer.

Both suburban and Boston pupils were asked before and after the summer experience what their vocational choice was, i.e., what they would like to be when they grow up. Results indicated that for both groups, before and after, the majority chose occupations under the professional, technical, and managerial category. (Table 4)

(Table 4 about here)

Though there were some differences which may merit further study, we were most impressed with the extent of the similarities.

CONCLUSIONS

In terms of the ongoing process of the program and the pupils' response to it, the project seemed quite successful. Both the Boston and suburban pupils participated actively in class. There was the usual

evidence of individual differences and greater overall participation in some classes than in others. Race, per se, did not seem to be a major barrier to contact among the pupils. There was evidence of the initial cohesiveness in each group and the gradual shifts in kinds of interactions which occur when two groups come into contact for the first time.

Evidence about the effects of the program, not too surprisingly, is much less clear. The two questions which had been selected for formal study were concerned with effects of the program as represented by changes in the Boston group's occupational information and goals. Contrary to expectations, the two groups did not differ markedly in their initial occupational information and goals as measured in this study; thus the questions can not be answered as they were planned. It is of interest that such expected differences did not exist, since it raises questions about some rather widely held beliefs that occupational awareness and goals are closely related to socioeconomic status. Of course, no definitive statements about this can be made simply on the basis of the present evidence.

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TABLE 1

Average Participation Indices for Class Subgroups

Week	Negro Girls	White Girls	Negro Boys	White Boys	Whole Class Responded
2	1.7	1.4	2.2	1.7	Not Recorded
3	2.1	1.1	2.1	1.3	2.6
4	3.4	1.6	2.7	2.8	2.9
5	1.5	1.0	1.5	2.1	.9
6	0.9	0.4	1.5	1.5	7.6
Mean	1.9	1.1	2.0	2.0	3.5

TABLE 2

Actual Number of Occupations Listed in Each Classification

Occupational Classification	Second Week				Sixth Week			
	Suburb		Boston		Suburb		Boston	
	15N	1140	15N	645	15N	450	15N	510
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Professional, technical and managerial	519	46	204	32	170	37	185	36
Clerical and sales	141	12	65	10	32	7	55	11
Service	128	11	125	19	60	13	76	15
Agricultural, marine and forestry	27	2	9	1	13	3	12	2
Mechanical	67	6	65	10	32	7	31	6
Manual	125	11	104	16	60	13	102	20
No Choice	133	12	73	11	83	18	49	10

TABLE 3

Number of Pupils Who Listed One or More Occupations in the Respective Classifications

Occupational Classification	Second Week				Sixth Week			
	Suburb N=76		Boston N=43		Suburb N=30		Boston N=34	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Professional, technical and managerial	76	100	43	100	30	100	34	100
Clerical and sales	66	87	35	81	22	73	28	82
Service	55	72	39	91	24	80	28	82
Agricultural, marine and forestry	22	29	7	16	11	37	10	29
Mechanical	40	53	29	67	21	70	18	53
Manual	52	68	39	91	24	80	32	94
No Choice	18	24	8	19	8	27	2	6

TABLE 4

Number of Vocational Choices in Each Classification

Occupational Classification	Second Week				Sixth Week			
	Suburb N=76		Boston N=43		Suburb N=30		Boston N=34	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Professional, technical and managerial	55	72	24	56	23	77	15	44
Clerical and sales	3	4	3	7	2	7	5	15
Service	4	5	8	19	2	7	3	9
Agricultural, marine and forestry	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mechanical	6	8	2	5	2	7	6	18
Manual	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	6
No Choice	7	9	6	14	1	3	3	9